

Commissioner Deborah A. Gist's Weekly Field Memo
Friday, November 18, 2011

Note from Commissioner Gist:

1. Rhode Island to seek "flexibility," changes to system of accountability under [ESEA](#)

From the R.I. Department of Education (RIDE):

2. Transition to Common Core will lead to changes in mathematics [GLEs assessed in 2013](#)
3. RIDE provides additional guidance on establishing [District Evaluation Committees](#)
4. West Bay Collaborative to contact districts regarding fiscal agreements for RIDE [Evaluation ISPs](#)
5. 12 more sessions scheduled Module 3 for [Personnel Evaluating Teachers](#)
6. RIDE to share [evaluation-training attendance](#) data and teacher-evaluator ratios with districts
7. Schedule released for 2012 [SurveyWorks!](#)
8. RIDE schedules Educator Evaluation and Student Learning Objective forum for arts educators
9. Superintendents asked to attend webinar on Tuesday on [Teacher-Course-Student data](#) collection – **Action Item**

From the U.S. Department of Education:

10. Communication system established to allow educators to publish, use, share [learning resources](#)

Action Item Calendar

Monday (November 21): [AP survey](#) for fee waivers due

Tuesday (November 22): Superintendents asked to attend [webinar](#)

December 1: Districts verify all [personnel assignments](#)

December 1: For TCS, Districts should clarify model to determine ["contributing educators"](#)

December 9: [Textbook reimbursement](#) forms due

June 30, 2012: Schools and districts submit [final personnel assignments](#)

Note: Beginning this week, reminders in the Action Item Calendar contain hyperlinks that will open the field memo in which the action item originally appeared.

Note from Commissioner Gist:

1. Rhode Island to seek “flexibility,” changes to system of accountability under ESEA

As we’re all aware, the No Child Left Behind act of 2001 set a goal of all students becoming proficient (100-percent proficiency) by 2014. As we approach that date, the inflexibility of the law has become apparent:

- all schools treated alike, regardless of whether they miss one target or many;
- schools measured solely by a snapshot of performance on a standardized test (percent proficient); and
- no clarity as to whether proscribed sanctions (school choice, supplemental educational services) or other provisions of the act (requirement for highly qualified teachers) improve student achievement.

As Congress considers reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA), the U.S. Department of Education is allowing states to apply for “flexibility” regarding some of the provisions of ESEA. We have notified the U.S. Department of Education that we intend to apply for flexibility during the 2nd round of applications, in February 2012.

Flexibility for Rhode Island would mean major changes to our accountability and classifications systems. These changes will allow us to strengthen our accountability system. We have no interest in retreating from accountability. We are interested in looking at these areas, among others:

- We want our accountability system to measure the “magnitude of gaps,” not treating all missed targets equally.
- We are interested in using data other than state summative assessments; these data might include measures of school climate, teacher preparation, the efficacy of professional development.
- We want to fine-tune the interventions that we will initiate for schools that miss targets so that these interventions can be based on the particular needs of these schools.
- We want to develop a clear definition of career-ready standards as a frame for the accountability system.
- We want to ensure that our measures of accountability are clear and transparent.

Over the next two months, we will be engage in community outreach with many stakeholders, including representatives of school leadership, teachers, parents, community leaders, students, and others, to get input and feedback to help us develop and refine our application for flexibility. I will keep you informed about this community outreach and about ongoing developments in our application for ESEA flexibility.

From RIDE:

2. Transition to Common Core will lead to changes in mathematics GLEs assessed in 2013

Please see the following message from our Office of Instruction, Assessment, and Curriculum:

The NECAP reading, writing, and mathematics tests will continue to be administered in the fall of 2012 and 2013 and will remain aligned with the current GLEs and GSEs.

There will be *no* changes to the GLEs/GSEs assessed on the NECAP reading, writing, or mathematics tests in the fall of 2012.

There will be *no* changes to the GLEs/GSEs assessed on the NECAP reading or writing tests in the fall of 2013

There will be *some* changes to the *GLEs* assessed on the NECAP mathematics tests in the fall of 2013. Due to differences from the Common Core State Standards (CCSS), the following GLEs will *not* be assessed in mathematics in 2013:

Grade 3	DSP 2-4
Grade 4	DSP 3-5
Grade 5	DSP 4-4, DSP 4-5, and GM 4-5
Grade 6	DSP 5-5
Grade 7	DSP 6-4, DSP 6-5, FA 6-2, and GM 6-5
Grade 8	FA 7-2

These GLEs, which include concepts such as probability, combinations, similarity, and rate of change, will *not* be assessed on the NECAP mathematics tests in the fall of 2013 primarily because these GSEs have moved to a higher grade level in the CCSS.

There are *no* changes to the *GSEs* assessed on the Grade 11 NECAP tests in the fall of 2012 or 2013.

Note 1: Because science is not impacted by the CCSS, there will be *no* changes to the NECAP science tests.

Note 2: The transition to the CCSS also means that some *locally assessed* GLEs (e.g., DSP3-4 and G5-5) and GSEs may have shifted grades or been replaced in the standards. Districts and schools should review their local-assessment policies to ensure that local assessments are aligned with curriculum and instruction during the transition to the CCSS.

For additional information on the transition to the Common Core, please go to the RIDE Web site at:

<http://www.ride.ri.gov/Division-EEIE/transition.aspx>

3. RIDE provides additional guidance on establishing District Evaluation Committees

Please see this notice from our Office of Educator Quality and Certification:

The Educator Evaluation System Standards require each district to have a District Evaluation Committee responsible for informing and monitoring the implementation of the educator-evaluation system. Establishing the District Evaluation Committee is an important step in preparation for full implementation in 2012-13. Information about establishing the committees, including next steps, can be found at:

<http://www.ride.ri.gov/EducatorQuality/EducatorEvaluation/RIModelFAQ.aspx>.

4. West Bay Collaborative to contact districts regarding fiscal agreements for RIDE Evaluation ISPs

Please see this notice from our Office of Educator Quality and Certification:

The West Bay Collaborative, acting as a fiscal agent for RIDE, will be contacting districts to ask you to sign fiscal agreements for RIDE Evaluation ISPs. Please note that this applies only to districts that have been assigned an Evaluation ISP by RIDE.

5. 12 more sessions scheduled Module 3 for Personnel Evaluating Teachers

Please see this notice from our Office of Educator Quality and Certification:

To date, more than 300 educators have attended Module 3 for Personnel Evaluating Teachers. Evaluators who have yet to attend Module 3 have 12 additional opportunities between Monday (November 21) and December 8. Evaluators can register by going to the eRIDE Workshop calendar, at:

<http://www.ride.ri.gov/applications/ridecalendar.aspx>.

6. RIDE to share evaluation-training attendance data and teacher-evaluator ratios with districts

Please see this notice from our Office of Educator Quality and Certification:

To help districts monitor implementation of the educator-evaluation system, RIDE will send each district the attendance data from the evaluation-training sessions for their list of designated evaluators. As part of this communication, RIDE will also share an analysis of the number of teachers per designated evaluator at the elementary-, middle-, and high-school levels.

7. Schedule released for 2012 SurveyWorks!

Please see this notice from our Office of Data, Analysis, and Research:

SurveyWorks!, the annual statewide surveys of students, parents, teachers and staff, and administrators, is gearing up for the 2012 surveys. Notable changes from last school

year include a new schedule with overlapping dates for the Student, Teacher/Staff, and Administrator Surveys and an earlier rollout of the Parent Survey. Schools will now have the option of choosing to administer the parent survey either on paper or online. The draft schedule for the survey and related activities is:

Schools identify Site Coordinators: To be completed by today (November 18)
Site Coordinator training: December 1 - 20 (selected dates TBD)
Parental opt-out process: January 5-19, 2012
Parent Survey: January 5 - February 16, 2012
Student Survey: January 30 - March 15, 2012
Teacher/Staff Survey: January 30 - March 15, 2012
Administrator Survey: January 30-March 15, 2012

WestEd, our contractor, has begun contacting schools this month to gather basic information about school and staff size and the name of the school's site coordinator.

Finally, check out the school-level reports for the 2010-11 survey results that were recently posted on InfoWorks Live:

<http://infoworks.ride.ri.gov/>.

Thank you for your support of SurveyWorks and for the hard work that you and your staff members do to make these surveys a success.

Please contact the SurveyWorks! Team with any questions, at 1-877-787-5725 or surveyworks@wested.org.

8. RIDE schedules Educator Evaluation and Student Learning Objective forum for arts educators

Please see this notice from our Office of Multiple Pathways:

RIDE and the Rhode Island Arts Learning Network (ALN), invite visual art, music, theater, and dance teachers; assistant superintendents; and evaluators of arts educators to an informational meeting that will provide clarity about what you can expect from the new Education Evaluation process. Lisa Foehr, Director of Educator Quality and Certification, and Laura Kacewicz, lead for the development of the Student Learning Objectives (SLOs), will explain our expectations, and they will answer questions relating to the evaluation of arts teachers. The forum is scheduled for:

Wednesday, December 14, 2 – 4:30 p.m. (formal presentation begins at 3 p.m.)
Rhode Island Foundation, One Union Station, Providence

Click here [for more information](#).

Additionally, the ALN will be announcing plans for supporting school and district arts-educator efforts by supporting teams of teachers in the development of SLOs.

Registration is required. To register, [click here](#). You are encouraged to ask any questions you have directly on the registration form so that RIDE staff can be best prepared to respond.

If you have any questions, please contact Rosemary.Burns@ride.ri.gov

9. Superintendents asked to attend webinar on Tuesday on Teacher-Course-Student data collection – *Action Item*

Please see this notice from our Office of Data, Analysis, and Research:

The success of the educator-evaluation process, the Instructional Management System, and the Educator Performance and Support System depends on the proper planning and implementation of Teacher-Course-Student data collection.

This is a reminder that we will host a webinar on this topic on **Tuesday** (November 22), from 9:00 - 10:30 a.m. Please register at:

<https://www3.gotomeeting.com/register/708855870>.

All superintendents are asked to attend this webinar, but assistant superintendents, principals, technology directors, and data managers are also invited to attend.

From the U.S. Department of Education:

10. Communication system established to allow educators to publish, use, share learning resources

Please see this announcement from the U.S. Department of Education:

The Departments of Education and Defense announced this week the launch of “Learning Registry” (<http://www.learningregistry.org/>), an open source community and technology designed to improve the quality and availability of learning resources in education. The official launch is an important milestone in the effort to more effectively share information about learning resources among a broad set of stakeholders in the education community. The project was made possible by a \$2.6-million investment, with the Departments of Education and Defense contributing \$1.3 million each to the effort. Rather than creating an alternate destination to existing Web sites, Learning Registry is a communication system allowing existing educational portals and online systems to publish, consume, and share important information about learning resources with one another and the public while respecting the privacy of individual users. The community and technology are intended to create opportunities for future innovation in areas that are just now starting to be explored. (Secretary Duncan’s remarks from the launch are available at <http://www.ed.gov/news/speeches/launching-learning-registry>.)

Our partners at Rhode Island PBS have sent us this message about the Learning Registry:

We are thrilled to announce that PBS LearningMedia is among the first services to offer content from the U.S. Department of Education's new Learning Registry. This is an exciting and important partnership that demonstrates the value of public broadcasting and how PBS LearningMedia can be harnessed to share the best of public media's digital learning resources to teachers and students.

RIDE will post this field memo on Tuesday, at:

<http://www.ride.ri.gov/Commissioner/fieldmemos/default.aspx>